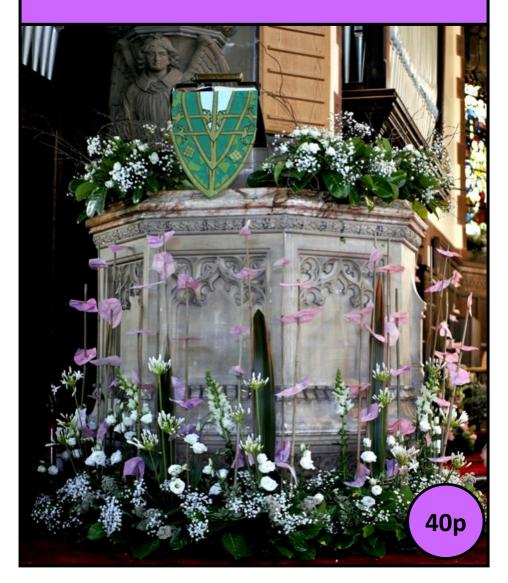
Christ Church Magazine September 2023



PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on page 4.

THE PARISH TEAM

Vicar Paul Kingman 812669

The Vicarage, Bromfield Court

Children & Families Worker Peter Cuthbert 07733 042205

peter.j.cuthbert@btinternet.com

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CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

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CHURCH SCHOOLS

Christ Church C.E.(Controlled) First School, Northesk Street.

Headteacher Mrs A. Graham BA(Hons) NPQH 01785 336545

Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mr C. Wright MAEd 01785 334900

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and People

Please send your articles for the October magazine to us by 15th September

Cover Picture Flower Festival

Magazine 40p each month or £4 each year. Money may be given to your magazine deliverer or handed in to the Church office

Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website www.christchurchstone.org Parish office email office@christchurchstone.org Magazine contributions magazine@christchurchstone.org

September 2023

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Fri	1st		
Sat	2nd	8.30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	3rd	9.15 am	Communion; Mark 12: 18-27 "A question of Life"
Mon	4th		Schools return
Tue	5th	10.30 am	Communion; Psalm 34 "I know the Lord is good"
Wed	6th	7.30 pm	Standing Committee meeting
Thu	7th		
Fri	8th		
Sat	9th		
Sun	10th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer; Mark 12: 28-34 "A question of Love"
Mon	11th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	12th	10.30 am 12.30 pm 2.00 pm	Communion; Psalm 103 "Count your blessings" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy Autumn House service
Wed	13th	9.00 am 2.00 pm 3.30 pm	Oulton Abbey Nursing Home service
Thu	14th	11.00 am 1.10 pm	St Mary's Home service Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	15th		

September 2023

	Date	Time	Events
Sat	16th		
Sun	17th	9.15 am	Communion; Mark 12: 35-40 "A question of Character"
Mon	18th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	19th	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Communion; Psalm 116 "The Lord rescued me" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	20th	9.00 am 3.30 pm 7.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekkers PCC meeting
Thu	21st	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	22nd		
Sat	23rd		
Sun	24th	9.15 am	All age service; Mark 12: 41-44 "A question of Generosity"
Mon	25th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	26th	10.30 am 12.30 pm	Communion; Psalm 65 "The Lord of the harvest" Pursuit Club Christ Church Academy
Wed	27th	9.00 am 3.30 pm 7.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekkers Guy Wilcox talk from the Leprosy Mission
Thu	28th	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	29th		
Sat	30th		

Power unleashed

While the box office takings for the film 'Barbie' were huge, it wasn't the only summer film to grab the public's attention. The film 'Oppenheimer' (July 2023) retells the story of the atom bomb being developed and used.

Robert Oppenheimer, often credited as the "father of the atomic bomb", was a theoretical physicist and the director of the Manhatten Project's Los Alamos Laboratory, which designed and built the world's first nuclear weapons. Oppenheimer became an important historical figure, but also spokesman for atomic bomb ethics and political discussions about nuclear power.

The film was inspired by the biography called "The American Prometheus: The triumph and tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer" (2005). Prometheus defied the Olympian gods by stealing fire from them and giving it to humans in the form of technology, knowledge, and civilisation. The film charts the course of Oppenheimer's rise in the scientific world, alongside a rather complicated history of skeletons in the cupboard (his political leanings remained the grounds for suspicion and mistrust by the Government) and a rather messy personal life. On the broader canvass it raises complex political and ethical issues. Not least of which was how to ensure that the Nazi's, who were about 18 months ahead of the rest of the world, did not produce the weapon first. The USA was first to drop an Atom Bomb on Hiroshima (6.8.45), but despite the huge loss of life did not lead to Japan's surrender until a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki (9.8.45). The argument for its use centred on the minimising of even greater human destruction resulting from Nazi advance.



The film explores the question, does the end justify the means? Some would say yes, the bombings were necessary to quell the fighting by the Japanese and bring an end to World War II. Yet, as the famous physicist Niels Bohr remarked in the film, "A bomb falls on the just and the unjust."

The bombings did lead to the end of WWII and Japan's surrender, but it came at a heavy human cost, most of the casualties being civilians. The development led to much soul searching by Oppenheimer and the scientific community as to whether it was justifiable and whether they had unleashed a power that was difficult to control. This is evidenced by how the atom bomb meant that there was a threat of thermo-nuclear war for the duration of the Cold W from 1945 to 1991. It continues to be a prospect in our contemporary world.

In the closing scenes, Oppenheimer tells Albert Einstein that he believed they'd started "a chain reaction that would destroy the entire world". The thought of nuclear annihilation is undeniably bleak, but a real threat. What are we to make of this depressing view? Jesus revealed what would mark the end of time when he warned his followers of history being littered with aggression: 'You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come' (Matthew 24v6).

Christian belief affirms that the LORD God is Sovereign over history and has unleashed the ultimate power of reconciliation, through the cross of Christ: "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those of us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor 1v18). God's gift of salvation offers redemption and transformation, irrespective of the skeletons in our cupboards, or even a questionable life's work. All who humble themselves before Him will not be written off, since none are beyond the reach of His grace. Jesus brings us the prospect of future hope: a new heaven and a new earth, free from all evil and sin, where there will be peace and plenty for all. The gospel truth gives us a framework for ethical decisions as we look to the goal of history.

Paul Kingman

This year Harvest Sunday will be in October. As usual, we will give to Tearfund. The 2023 Harvest Appeal, focuses on their work in Zimbabwe.

In addition, we're taking part in **food.gives**, a Barnabas Fund project which we have supported since it was launched in 2021. We can give dried goods from the list below.

- Chick peas,
- Lentils,
- ♦ Rice,
- ♦ Salt,
- Sugar,
- Other pulses: dried beans, dried broad beans, dried peas.

(Maximum weight for items is 2kg.)

Goods may be brought to church on the following Sundays – 24th September, 1st, 8th, & 15th October. They will be distributed to hungry & persecuted Christians in Africa, the Middle East & SE Asia via Barnabas Aid's church partners. During 2022, food was sent to Pakistan, Tonga, Ukraine & Zimbabwe.

For more information visit the food.gives website.

The Big Quiz Night

As part of our Benefice Harvest Celebrations this year we are holding a Big Quiz Night. It is supporting the work of TEAR Fund and takes place on Saturday 7th October at 7.00pm in the Christ Church Centre.

Bring your team (maximum of 6 people) or come on your own and we'll find you a team to join. It will be a fun quiz night and we'll be joining others around the country in this event.

Refreshments will be provided plus you can enter our fruit pie competition. Bring your fruit pie to be shared with attendees and there will be a prize for the Prettiest Pie. Tickets £2.50 per head.

	Mission Prayer Diary
	Church Mission Society
1st	Our link in S.Asia E & R have both had medical treatments and we pray for future health
2nd	That God would strengthen local churches in Malaysia and the effective support provided by Asia CMS
3rd	The joyful and welcome face to face theological training that E has (after too many months on screen)
4th	For E supervising Master level degree students
5th	For E writing a course on a New Testament letter for different cultural contexts to use where often the hardships addressed by Peter will resonate with students
6th	The inter-cultural church services and home groups
	European Christian Mission - Stephen and Tabita Bell planting churches in Croatia
7th	The Emanuel Baptist Church of Varaždin has planted a church 16km away in Novi Marof (a town of 13,000 people in northern Croatia). Pray for good leadership and a healthy church community
8th	In 2016 the radio project developed: a team of 10 people are involved in preparing and presenting live evangelistic radio programmes to around 40 thousand listeners twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays

9th	"Pokreni se" ("Let's Go!") was a three day evangelistic campaign/festival in the summer in Varaždin. Pray for ongoing fruit from these outreach events involving the town's evangelical churches
10th	In April 2014 a church was planted in Dugo Selo: the first evangelical church in a town of 25,000 inhabitants. This small church has a great influence in the community, doing various evangelistic activities across the year. Give thanks that the town is very accepting of the church. We pray for it to continue!
11th	For Stephen who sustained a recent knee injury for this to recover
12th	For good plans to be made for a church planting conference in Berlin in October with reps from 27 European countries
	TEAR Fund works with many poor communities across the world and relief to disaster areas working through local churches and agencies.
13th	Around the Borena region of Ethiopia there have been five failed rainy seasons: about 20 million people need urgent food support. TEAR Fund has been working with local churches to provide cash grants for emergency food needs, livestock and drought-resilient seeds
14th	Following the earthquakes in Turkey as part of the disaster relief TEAR Fund has launched an emergency appeal. Our church partner in Syria is providing vital supplies such as warm clothing, nourishing food and hygiene essentials
15th	For the ongoing campaign around harvest festivals to raise awareness and to provide financial support for the work

	CMS Partner Tim Lee who oversees Jigsaw Kids Ministries in Manila
16th	The work amongst the most needy in society sees many medical needs! Please pray with us for rapid healing and the finances to cover hospital fees
17th	Remember Salhee (a Jigsaw worker for 20 years) who was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer in July, is now undergoing chemotherapy
18th	Give thanks for answered prayer for healing, through medication and therapy, and for intervention by Jigsaw teams to assist sick and needy people in the slum areas of Metro Manila
19th	For Jigsaw to have a vision for the future structure of its organisation so that it may continue to be serving the Lord's purposes and serve the people well
	Hebron School : Ralph and Dagmar Baron
20th	Give thanks for Richard, the new Principal, Sunil and Bene, the new Vice Principals as they take up their leadership roles at Heb- ron school, entering its 125th year of serving Christian worker families in Asia
21st	For us as we take time to reflect and transition step by step into whatever comes next in their role as Interserve mission partners
22nd	Hebron student leavers who await their A Level results and begin gap years and university courses in the autumn; that they will find a new Christian community and keep growing in faith

23rd	A permanent place to live, near family in Brighton, and the right church to join in fellowship
	Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF): Matthew Leung
24th	Thanksgiving to God for Matthew's marriage to Rosie in August and prayer for their new life together
25th	For UCCF workers who meet in the summer for training and vision setting as they plan outreach and discipleship amongst the growing interest shown by students
26th	For Christian students during the summer break to walk with the Lord and return with fresh vision to serve Him at University – especially at the universities of Staffordshire, Keele and Harper Adams
	Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) – 'flying for life'
27th	For ground crew energy, attention to detail and wisdom
28th	For pilots transporting essential supplies and people for hospital treatment
29th	For pilot families to trust the Lord for pilots flying and their safe return
	African Pastors Fellowship (APF)
30th	The success of a recently relaunched African pastor resource hub and training library app called eVitabu, equipping local pastors to develop theological skills

On April 13th I took to my bed feeling very unwell. After 3 months Jeanette collected me from RSUH after what turned out to be a serious illness. I spent a total of 31 days and nights in hospital over 3 admissions at both County and Royal Stoke and had 2 operations.

We've both had a tough time but remember that the hospitals have had to put up with me too, as an in-patient for a whole month rather than as a volunteer!

First, I must say that all the staff were wonderful, and especially so on ward 106 at RS where I was for the longest period of time but, I ask myself, why was I in a ward which said at the entrance "Female Gynaecology"? Some of the nurses even recognised me out of my volunteers uniform (my bright yellow tie) and in my pyjamas! The care in Ward 106 was truly amazing—nothing was too much trouble and the nurses went out of their way to see if I needed anything at all.

The members of the SPaRCs team were also amazing. I was regularly visited and prayed with and was even able to pray with other patients as I felt a bit better. And I almost recruited a new chaplaincy volunteer; watch this space! The culmination of this was on July 9th when I went to the Sunday service in the chapel.

Afterwards I felt re-energised to live for the LORD and not for myself. It's so easy when going through hard times to feel sorry for oneself but after that service I realised in a fresh way that 'it's not all about me, how I feel and what's happening to me'. With God's help I can get through that*. What it is all about is whether I am living the best life that I can for Jesus—am I shining as a light for Him in this world wherever I am and whoever I'm with? Do others see Jesus reflected in my eyes and attitudes?

I praise the LORD that my self-centredness has been challenged once again and I have been empowered to put HIM and others before myself.

Philippians 2: 3-5. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ".

* Philippians 4: 13. "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength"

Dave Rowlands

14 Back in the U.K. after 40 years' overseas

At the end of June, our Mission Partners, Ralph & Dagmar Baron returned to the U.K. from India, where they have been teaching, once again, at Hebron School in Tamil Nadu province, for the past three years. Reflecting on their final weeks at the school, they said that it was "very busy and challenging and yet full of answers to prayer and encouragement".

One of the highlights was the final 'Alternative Service' which Ralph & Dagmar had been leading each week for the past year, for the more senior students who didn't want to attend regular school assemblies. They were encouraged by signs of growth of faith especially from two boys whom they had been praying for all term. One of them, a school leaver, was baptised on the Sunday before Ralph & Dagmar left; another boy, in year 10, wrote a lovely thank you note saying that this year's Alternative Service was 'a big of part his coming to faith'.

Another huge answer to prayer was the provision of sufficient teachers for the next school year. Just 4 weeks before the end of the school year the number of staff needed had risen to 15, but only 2 new teachers had been appointed. At the end of June, the appointment of a new School Principal completed the need for staff—Richard Naylor, a very well qualified Head Teacher, with 16 years experience, including the past three years working with a Mission agency, was chosen to be the new School Principal.

After 40 years serving in India and Pakistan, Ralph & Dagmar are now on Home Assignment until the end of the year. They intend to continue working with Interserve until July 2024, when they both turn 66. In the meantime, Dagmar is supporting the teacher who has taken on her role as Vice Principal for Academics, at Hebron.

Ralph & Dagmar are busy now, supporting their children and enjoying their new role as grandparents to Samuel (6 months' old) and Ada Joy (born on 20th June, two days before Ralph & Dagmar arrived here). Ralph's appointment to see the Cardiologist regarding fitting of an internal defibrillator is now rescheduled for mid-September; he is still waiting for a date to see a Consultant about his bronchiectasis.

Ralph and Dagmar hope to start visiting their supporting churches in the Autumn. They are very grateful for Interserve's support, enabling them to transition step by step, and possibly take a sabbatical in the new year to discover, train, and prepare for what comes next.

We pray for God's blessings and His guidance for them as they settle here and seek new ways to serve the Lord, after so many years abroad.

For more information, see the Baron's latest newsletter in the folder under the 'Mission Matters' noticeboard.

Elizabeth

Evangelism across Europe

In their latest newsletter (July 2023), Stephen & Tabita Bell outline their latest evangelistic events, worked together with ECM (European Christian Mission) teams from Belgian, Portugal, Brazil and America.

In May, Stephen & Tabita travelled to Portugal to work with their former Croatian colleagues, Emanoel and Francine, who now lead a church in central Lisbon. The conference was held over 5 nights, with the Youth section (15 – 30 year olds) meeting at 11.30pm, after the main sessions finished, and continuing throughout the night!

At the beginning of June, three churches together, held a 3-day street evangelistic event in the main town square in Varaždin, Croatia. Assisted by teams from America, Brazil, and Belgium, they witnessed to people individually, gave short evangelistic talks, and led music and singing sessions. [See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yu08BunnB4w] A special children's event was held on Saturday morning. Afterwards the Belgium team pledged to return annually, for the next 7 years, to support future Croatian evangelistic events.

At the end of June, 110 children from the three churches in Varaždin, including 12 'Roma' children and 15 Ukrainian refugees, enjoyed a week of fun, teaching, games and fellowship at Summer camp. Each evening they all took part in an evangelistic service led by Tabita.

Stephen and Tabita ask us to pray for a good response to each of these evangelistic events so that many more people across Europe will come to know and love Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and enjoy the fellowship of their local church.

Elizabeth

When I joined Christ Church in Stone, Staffordshire in May 2015 after moving from Essex, I was immediately drawn to its open-hearted congregation. The journey I embarked on over the next eight years became a life-changing experience for both me and my family.

A Warm Welcome... I recall stepping into the welcoming embrace of Christ Church for the first time. The people were friendly and genuinely interested in getting to know me. The relaxed and approachable nature of the community made it easy to talk to everyone. Unlike other experiences, I never felt pressured to attend the church, but rather felt a natural connection with the congregation.

Embracing Diversity... One of the questions that has often come up is why I didn't seek out a church with more people of my own race. My belief has always been that if you truly want to learn about and know the local community, integration is key. At Christ Church, I was able to share faith with people from all walks of life, learn from them, and feel a sense of unity that transcended our differences.

The Core Values: Gospel, Engagement, and Support... During my eight years at Christ Church, I found myself drawn by three core aspects. First and foremost, the gospel was at the heart of everything. Whether it was the preaching, events, or various activities, everything was Christ-cantered, aligning with my spiritual beliefs.

Secondly, the engagement was truly exceptional. The church involved me in numerous activities such as home bible studies, church bible studies, youth ministry, church school, and conferences. These activities were not only enriching but made me feel valued and an integral part of the community.

Lastly, the support and friendship that my family and I received have been unwavering. Over the past eight years, we were blessed with steadfast support during both good and bad times, leading to long-lasting friendships. From a single man to a husband and father of two lovely daughters, Christ Church has been with me through all the significant milestones.

A Fond Farewell... As I bid farewell to Christ Church, I look back with a heart full of gratitude. The lessons learned and friendships forged have shaped me in ways that words can scarcely describe. I wish the Vicar and all the members at Christ Church Stone all the best in the future.

As I settle into my new life in Northern Ireland, I extend an open invitation to anyone from Christ Church who happens to visit this beautiful region. A short reunion would be a joyous occasion to reminisce and celebrate the bond we share.

In conclusion, my time at Christ Church, Stone, Staffordshire, has been a journey filled with growth, community, and faith. The relationships and values I cultivated will continue to inspire and guide me as I move forward, forever cherishing the warmth and wisdom I found in that sacred space.

Anisa

Nefyn - one leader's first experience

One of the first weeks that I had back in church back in July, after coming home from my second year at university, Andy Stone approached me and asked me, like most people, what my plans were for the summer holiday. As this was not the first time I had been asked that specific question, I told him that at that time I had no concrete plans for the summer, and that was the point at which I was first introduced to Nefyn and the camps that they do there for the schools' summer holidays. So from that I decided to sign up, even though I still had very little information about the camps and did not really know what to expect, though I did think I had a vague idea from camps that I had been on as a child such as with the Guides.

The whole experience surpassed my expectations though as there was so much happening and so much joy and enthusiasm on the faces of both the children and the leaders whether they were participating in the activities (like the mini sports tournaments) that occurred during the day or listening to the leaders during the 'quiet times' or the evening meetings, both of which were opportunities for the adults to pass the word of God on to the children, and share their own experiences. The days were very long as I was a tent leader and was expected to be with the five girls who were in the tent I was supervising from 08:15 to around 22:00 every day, but overall I would say that it was 100% worth every minute, and it brought a week of fun into my otherwise work filled summer holiday, and if I am able I would love to go back next year and do the same thing again.

Heddus

On Wednesday 27th September at 7.30 p.m. we are hosting a talk by The Leprosy Mission in Christ Church.

Every two minutes, someone is diagnosed with leprosy. That's more than 200,000 new cases a year. Although it is curable, millions of people worldwide are living with the effects of the disease, from physical disability to mental health problems, poverty and discrimination.

The Leprosy Mission England & Wales work in ten countries around the world:

- Getting the cure to people
- Caring for disabled people
- Fighting stigma and advocating change
- Providing screening clinics for diagnosing and treating those affected by the disease
- ♦ Carrying out pioneering research
- Running vocational training centres to help retrain those affected by leprosy

Guy Willcock, the Community Partnerships Manager for Central England and North Wales will be the speaker. Come along, invite your friends to come too and hear more about the valuable work of The Leprosy Mission.

Monthly Prayer Breakfast

On the first Saturday of every month we meet for our Prayer Breakfast at 8.30 a.m. in the church centre.

In prayer we give thanks and call on the Lord to provide us with the opportunities, resources and fruit in the ministry entrusted to us. We would love to increase our numbers since it would signal our dependence on the Lord of the harvest.

We conclude with a breakfast of cereals, toast and a time of fellowship. Do join us.

We would very much like to thank you for all the cards, letters, gifts, prayers and good wishes that you gave us as we left Stone to move to Lancaster, it was very kind of you. We value the prayers of you all as we start again in a new location close to our daughter Lois, her husband Dave and children Henry and Savannah. It has been difficult to leave Stone where we have so many friends and have lived for such a long time. However, we are not really very far away and we will be visiting Stone occasionally, I am sure. And if you find yourself in a traffic jam going north on the M6, send us a text and we will have the kettle boiling when you reach our house.

There is plenty to do in the garden here, which needed some attention when we arrived, and the garden vouchers we received will enable us to buy plants and other items to brighten it up. The M&S vouchers will provide things for inside the house, too. We thought that our new house was bigger than our house in Stone but the piles of unopened boxes suggest otherwise, and it will take us a week or two to find a home for everything. On the other hand, we found several things we did not know we had, such as four paint roller trays, two of them still in their shop wrappers, so the charity shops have benefitted!

Best wishes to you all

Dave and Enid

Have you got what it takes?

Last month we gave thanks to God for Dave Bell, our magazine editor, for his years of service compiling our magazine and finding interesting extra articles. We are now looking for a team to take on this important ministry.

We need a person to commission articles and ensure they come in. We are looking to get a suitable photo for each month for the front cover. Collation of the articles is in hand and the printing is done by the administrators in the office. If you'd like to be involved please contact our Vicar, Paul.

Deanery Synod Reps Helen Bowes, Dave Rowlands

P.C.C. Members Pete Kelly, Estella Woodhead, Jacqueline

Abrahams, Shirley Hallam, Gary Williams Marylyn Hillman, Diane Aspey, Liz Mason Phil Tunstall, Andy Stone, Shelagh Sanders

Lynne Bakker-Collier

Secretary **Shelagh Sanders**

Treasurer Pete Kelly **Envelopes, Gift Aid** Steve Taylor

FLOWER ROTA **SIDESPERSONS**

Sheila Hawley Jacqueline Abrahams 3rd September

10th September Marilyn Overall

Northesk Street

17th September Angela Brandon Pete Kelly

24th September Jeanette Rowlands

ROADS FOR PRAYER

3rd September	10th September
Old Road	Victoria Street
Stonefield Court	Whitebridge Lane
Stonefield Square	Alma Street
Victor Street	Bromfield Court

17th September 24th September Granville Terrace Margaret Street **Dominic Court** Newcastle Street King's Avenue Newcastle Road Longton Road

